SEZ in Karnataka

743. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up Special Economic Zone, IT Special Economic Zone and the Export Promotion Industrial Park in the country and more particularly in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the likely benefits that will accrue to Karnataka with the establishment of above Zones/Parks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) There is no proposal for the Central Gvoernment to set up any new Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and the policy of the Government is to encourange and facilitate establishment of SEZs in the private sector or joint sector in association with the State Governments or by the State Governments themselves. There is also no proposal to set up any Export Promotion Industrial Park.

(c) The likely benefits that will accrue on account of establishment of SEZs include generation of additional economic activity, promotion of exports and services, promotion of investment from domestic and foreign sources, creation of employment opportunities and development of infrastructure facilities.

Extension of moratorium period to coffee growers

744. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering the demand of the coffee growers to extend the moratorium period for coffee growers who were not able to secure the interest waiver extended under the Special Coffee Term Loan Scheme;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the additional benefits Government propose to extend to the coffee growers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) The Coffee Board has recommended to the Government of India to extend time limit for

remitting the growers' share of 1/3rd interest on Special Coffee Term Loan (SCTL) during the moratoruim period from 30.6.2005 to 31.3.2006.

(c) There is no proposal to extend any additional benefits.

Steps to contain falling tobacco prices

745. SHR NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that due to falling tobacco prices, the tobacco growers of Andhra Pradesh and various other States are facing problems in various other States are facing problems in purchasing seeds and fertilizers and are not in a position to continue tobacco cultivation which is leading to huge loss of foreign exchange to our nation;

(b) if so, whether Government would assure of making procurement of entire tobacco production mandatory through Tobacco Board, which may fix remunerated prices of tobacco every year;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) The quantity of tobacco marketed and the average price realised is increasing year by year. The foreign exchange earnings are also increasing. The Tobacco Board facilitates supplies of major inputs like seeds and fertilisers to registered growers.

(b) to (d) The average price realisation by growers is well above the Minimum Support Price (MSP) fixed by the Government. Hence, the need for market intervention/procurement by Tobacco Board is not deemed necesary.

AEZ for Tobacco in A.P.

746. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that tobacco exports from the country have crossed an all time high during this year touching 163 tonnes valued at about Rs. 1,362 crore;